

LD
4602
.D3
1839a

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

Chap. L 14602

Shelf ... 13
1839a

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.



A D D R E S S

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

AMERICAN WHIG AND CLIOSOPHIC SOCIETIES

OF THE

COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY.

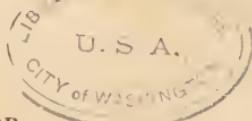
SEPTEMBER 24, 1839.

266
5553
BY AARON OGDEN DAYTON, Esq.

PRINCETON:

PRINTED BY ROBERT E. HORNOR.

1839.



LD⁴⁶⁰²
D³
1839a

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE CLIOSOPHIC SOCIETY, SEPTEMBER 25, 1839.

RESOLVED, That the thanks of this society be presented to AARON OGDEN DAYTON, Esq., for his able and interesting address delivered before the American Whig and Cliosophic Societies on yesterday afternoon, and that a copy be requested for publication.

PROF. J. MACLEAN,
" A. B. DOD,
" J. S. HART, } *Committee.*

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE AMERICAN WHIG SOCIETY, SEPTEMBER 25th, 1839.

RESOLVED, That a committee be appointed to present the thanks of the American Whig Society to AARON OGDEN DAYTON, Esq., for the able and eloquent address delivered by him yesterday, and to request a copy of the same for publication.

R. S. FIELD, Esq.
J. S. GREEN, Esq.
J. H. RICE, Esq. } *Committee.*

A D D R E S S .

GENTLEMEN OF THE AMERICAN WHIG AND CLIOSOPHIC
SOCIETIES :

THE reflections upon the past and the present, suggested by the position which at your request I have consented to occupy, affect me with varied and almost conflicting emotions. It is delightful to see harmoniously assembled as friends and brethren the members of opposing associations, who, while they practice a generous and wholesome emulation, do not forget that they are the children of one mother, whose parental feelings would be wounded by any wider separation than is necessary for their common improvement. Happy will it be for you, my young friends, if you carry with you into the walks of life the same magnanimous disposition which reflects so much honor upon you here, by treating those with whom, in your various pursuits, you may be brought into rivalry, and especially those who acknowledge with you the same alma mater, with that forbearance and friendly courtesy which no difference of opinion or contrariety of interest ought ever to preclude. It will not be the least important part of the moral discipline for which you will be indebted to this excellent institution, if, with other valuable acquisitions, you shall have learned, in a day when controversies in politics, in literature, and even in religion, are so often degraded by personal asperity, to practice "that charity which thinketh no evil" of an intel-

lectual adversary, however widely his sentiments may differ from your own, or however resolute he may be in their defence: a charity which, let me observe, is not more imperiously required by the precepts of Christianity, than it is by a becoming dignity of character. Combat arguments and opinions with as much zeal and energy as you will, but hold the personal reputation and motives of your antagonist as sacred as your own; and the peace of mind, the self respect, the respect of mankind, and the increased influence of your reasoning upon every candid and intelligent mind, which will be the result of such a course, will afford you an ample compensation for all the exertion that may have been requisite, to resist, in this regard, the natural impulses of heated feelings, or the corrupting effect of vicious example.

But this harmonious union of literary competitors is not the only subject for reflection which renders my appearance before you a source of interest and of pleasure. It is a joyous and animating spectacle, to behold a choice band of youth, trained and equipped for the contest, their hearts throbbing with a generous ambition, and their eyes sparkling with hope, just about to enter the arena of the world, to contend for the prizes that glitter before them in brilliant prospect. From the scene before me my thoughts naturally revert to the period, now alas ! beheld in distant retrospect, when I myself stood, as some of you now stand, with my foot upon the verge of busy life, watching with eager eye its fluctuating surface, and anxious to embark my fortune upon the tumultuous flood, My spirit kindles at the vivid recollection ; and memory, like a gleam of sunshine, lighting up the distant view, exhibits to me, beyond the wilderness of labor and care through which I

have passed, scenes and objects that have long been fading on my vision, radiant again with the bright hues of youthful hope. Recalling my own feelings at that interesting period of life, I sympathize with yours; and from the bottom of my heart I send up the prayer, that your highest expectations may be realized in that land of promise towards which your eyes are now directed in pleased anticipation. Though you meet with unforeseen discouragements in life, be of good cheer. Difficulties and dangers you must expect to encounter, whatever may be your avocations; but without opposition you cannot enjoy the honors of victory. So far from being disheartened at the sight of the adversaries that may dispute your advance, you should be stimulated to increased exertion. Clad in the moral panoply with which you have been here invested, you should go forth with courage to the conflict; trusting in Providence, and confident of ultimate success. Multitudes have preceded you who are now wearing the crowns they have won; and others are forcing their way to victory; while your youthful successors are pressing you onward to the contest. The extraordinary advantages which it has been your fortune to enjoy, have imposed upon you a solemn responsibility from which you cannot escape. You remember the sentence pronounced by him who is to be your judge, upon the man who buried his talent in the earth. You are bound, and until death shall discharge you, will continue bound, to the active employment of all your faculties, natural and acquired, in the cause of virtue and freedom. Could we lift the veil that hides futurity from our view, and trace with prophetic eye the progress through life of each of you whom to-morrow's ceremonial is to send forth to the cares and fortunes of the world, the

occasion would assume a magnitude and solemnity, which should not indeed repress the sympathetic joy with which we come to cheer you at your departure, but which would convey to us the seasonable admonition that we should "rejoice with trembling." Who can fix a limit to the influence, for good or for evil, which, at this day, in a country like ours, where knowledge emphatically is power, where public sentiment is the great lever by which even the mighty fabric of our government may be kept firm upon its base, or upheaved from its foundation, will be exercised by fourscore young men whose lives have been devoted, under the most favorable auspices, to the acquirement of that intelligence and those means of persuasion, which are best adapted to give them control over the general mind? In a few years they will be heard, as those who have preceded them from this institution are now heard, in the senate, at the forum, and in the pulpit; bringing all the force of their intellectual endowments to bear upon the destinies of nations or individuals: or they will perhaps be sending forth from their closets, upon the untiring wings of the press, opinions which may affect, through successive ages, the highest interests of their fellow men. Who can estimate the glorious influence that has emanated from the mind of a Newton, a Bacon, or a Locke, and has been silently diffusing itself, like the morning light, from the summits of civilization, which it first gilded with its rays, to the lowest vales of human existence; or who can contemplate without horror the flood of evil poured forth from the perverted intellect of a Hume or a Voltaire, rolling its baleful waters, with ever accumulating force, down the channel of ages?

But there are other reflections which render this occasion

one of peculiar interest to him who addresses you. This was the home, the literary home of his youth. The home of his youth ! When I utter these words do I not touch a chord in the breast of many a brother who hears me, that vibrates with a responsive strain "pleasant but mournful to the soul?" Which of you has not felt a pensive pleasure steal through his frame, and soften his heart, when he has returned after a long absence to the scenes of his childhood ? What though a stranger may have been found occupying the paternal hearth, and while you searched from face to face, where every countenance was once familiar, for the kind smile of recognition, you met only the cold gaze of idle curiosity ; did not the *inanimate* objects, endeared to you by early associations, appear to greet you at your approach ? Did not the ancient tree, under whose shade you had so often sported, seem to stretch out its venerable arms to embrace you ? Did not the pebbled brook, in which you had so often laved your infant feet, seem, with its gentle murmurs, to welcome you back to its refreshing bosom ? Did not the moss grown rock, upon which you had so often rested your young limbs, weary with rambling or with play, seem to invite you again to repose upon its velvet covering ?

Associations more elevated, and still more interesting, are suggested by a return to the scenes of college life. Who among us, my elder brethren, does not remember, with a tenderness of feeling that cannot be expressed, those halcyon days of literary seclusion, of untroubled serenity, and social enjoyment, which alas ! can never return but in recollection ?

"Ah mihi si vestræ reddit bona gaudia sedis
 Detque Deus docta posse quiete frui !
 Qualis eram cum me tranquilla mente sedentem
 Vidisti in ripa, Came serene, tua."

It is pleasant to come up once again from the bustle of busy life, though but a brief period, to this classic retreat. But a shade of melancholy passes over my feelings as I look around me in vain for the preceptors of my youth, inseparably connected in my memory with the scenes that surround me. They are gone : and gone too the companions of my college days ; dispersed, never to re-assemble on this side the grave. But though I find not here the instructors and companions of my early years, thy walls, revered Nassau Hall ! meet my eye like the countenance of an old and venerated friend. The sound of thy sweet-toned bell, which was wont to call me to study or devotion, falls like a familiar voice upon my ear. I hail thee, venerable as thou art, from thy age ; the benevolence of thy founders ; the wisdom and piety of the long line of thy preceptors; and the learning and patriotism of thy distinguished sons, who have illumined the history of thy country, for the last two centuries, with one tract of light. I rejoice that thy fame is brightening as thy years advance ; and that thy friends may look forward to thy future course, with a hope proportioned to the pride which they justly feel upon a retrospect of the past.

BRITHREN OF THE SOCIETIES I ADDRESS,

We have each of us an interest in the fame and fortune of the graduates of this institution ; and more especially of those who have been received as members of our respective associations. Such of them as have proved worthy of their Alma Mater are entitled to our affectionate respect while living, and we are bound to cherish their memory when dead. It is known to you that about ten years since a society was formed of the alumni of Nassau Hall, for the purpose of promoting mutual friendship among the members, and ad-

vancing the interests of the college. At the first meeting of the society, James Madison was elected President, and Aaron Ogden, Richard Stockton, Andrew Kirkpatrick, Ashbel Green, William Gaston, John Henry Hobart, and Henry W. Edwards, Vice Presidents. In the short space of time which has since elapsed, it has pleased Providence to remove by death all these officers, with the exception of three, who still live to reflect additional lustre upon the institution whose honors they bear. Instead of presenting to you, on this occasion, a series of abstract precepts, destitute, as they would necessarily be, of the weight which might be derived from long experience or profound observation on my part, I have thought that the object for which I have appeared before you might be best answered, by exhibiting a brief sketch of the characters of the departed brethren I have named; who were selected by the alumni as among the most worthy of their number, and whose loss we have been called but recently to deplore. "Example," says Lord Bacon, "is a globe of precepts." I wish to hold up these illustrious men to the view of our younger brethren as models of the statesman, the soldier, the lawyer, the judge, and the divine. To the elder part of my auditors I trust it will not be unpleasing to dwell for a few moments upon virtues with which most of them have been long familiar; while the melancholy pleasure will be mine, of placing, with filial hand, my humble garland upon the tombs of those I venerated and loved.

JAMES MADISON graduated at this institution during the presidency of Dr. Witherspoon, in the year 1771, at the age of twenty. It was but a few years afterwards, and at a most eventful period, that preceptor and pupil met as representa-

tives of their respective states upon the floor of the Federal Congress ; ranking, by universal acknowledgment, among the most eminent of that illustrious assembly. In 1776, five years after he had received his degree, Mr. Madison was elected to the Legislature of Virginia ; and gave his vote in favor of instructing the delegates of that State in Congress to propose a Declaration of Independence. Thus commenced the political career of this extraordinary man ; which may be said to have begun with the first, and closed in triumph with the second, war of Independence. It is remarkable that during the year for which he was then elected to the Legislature, he took no part in the debates of that body ; and that, owing principally to this cause, his real merits were so little known to the mass of his constituents, that he failed to be re-elected : thus becoming a martyr to that modest diffidence which so often throws a temporary veil over the highest order of talent, only to give an additional charm to its beauties when displayed ; indicating to the discerning eye the existence of the genius which it conceals, as the morning mist which sometimes obscures the rays of the sun at his rising, is known to the practised observer to be the harbinger of a brilliant day. To the members of the legislature, however, it was apparent from the first, that if Mr. Madison did not manifest shining abilities, he possessed those at least which were useful in the transaction of business : and but a few months elapsed after the loss of his election, before he was chosen by that body a member of the executive council. There he continued to serve, with increasing reputation, until 1779, when he was elected a delegate to the Continental Congress. From that time until his appointment as Secretary of State by Mr. Jefferson in 1801, scarcely a

question of general importance arose in any deliberative assembly of which he was a member, upon which he did not pour light from his capacious mind.

The two most prominent events in American history are undoubtedly the Declaration of Independence of 1776, and the formation of the Constitution of 1787. When justly viewed, the latter, I think, must be acknowledged the greater of the two. In saying this, let me not be understood as intending in the smallest degree to diminish the admiration and gratitude which fill the bosom of every American, at the thought of that mighty event, and its mighty authors, which gave birth to our nation, and laid the foundation upon which was subsequently erected that superstructure, under the protection of which we have risen with unparalleled rapidity to the first rank among the empires of the world. Never was a more sublime spectacle exhibited, in the annals of mankind, than that which was presented by the little band of patriots, who had already achieved a moral conquest over the power of Great Britain, by the exertion of an intellectual energy which made their royal oppressor tremble on his throne, now hopeless of peaceful redress, with hands joined in fraternal union and eyes uplifted to Heaven, mutually pledging their lives, their fortunes, and their honor, that what argument had failed to accomplish the sword should effect: that though the fleets of the tyrant should line their shores, and swarms of his troops should cover their land, the people of the colonies, few in number, without an army or a navy, destitute of pecuniary resources, and scattered over a large extent of country, should nevertheless be free. My tongue would "cleave to the roof of my mouth," should I attempt to disparage the noble intrepidity

with which the Declaration was made, or the persevering energy and valor by which it was maintained. The 4th of July, 1776, was a glorious day: and when we forget to celebrate it, with "guns, bells, bonfires, and illuminations,"* but above all, when we cease to be thankful to Heaven that such a day was vouchsafed to us, we shall deserve to be slaves. But great as was this event, the establishment of the Constitution was still more important; whether considered in reference to the difficulties encountered, the evils prevented, or the direct consequences which it produced. The Declaration of Independence was an assertion of rights which were alleged to be self-evident, and a statement of the wrongs which the colonies had suffered from the mother country. It did not profess to contain any newly discovered principles, or to be the result of any deep reflection upon the science of government. It was chiefly signalized by the courage and self-devotion which inspired it, and by the strong and luminous style in which the grievances the colonies had suffered were promulgated to the world. But the formation of the Constitution of 1787 was the discovery of a new world in political science; which the observation and reflection of the adventurers had taught them to look for, and of which they had deliberately gone in search. It was the accomplishment of what had never before been done, though often attempted—the foundation of a confederated republic upon a firm and durable basis. The great problem for solution had been, not 'whether the people had a right to govern themselves,' but 'how they could govern themselves.' This problem was solved by our Constitution. It was a work

* Letter of John Adams, written the day after the Declaration of Independence was agreed to by Congress.

of the profoundest wisdom, and the purest patriotism ; carried on amid discouragements which rendered its completion nearly hopeless, and consummated, in its final adoption by the delegates and by the states, through an almost visible interposition of that Divine Power, whose special aid had, at a most critical period, been earnestly and devoutly implored.

The Declaration of Independence relieved us from tyranny and oppression which justly provoked a spirit of resistance, and the removal of which was worth all the expenditure of blood and treasure which it cost. But what would the liberty thus acquired have availed, without a constitution to secure and perpetuate its blessings ? Tyrannized over and oppressed as the colonies were by the British king, they nevertheless enjoyed a measure of freedom and prosperity, which was happiness itself when compared with the licentiousness with which at the close of the revolution the states were threatened. When the pressure of a common enemy had ceased to operate upon the independent members of the old confederation, they were ready to fall apart by their own weight. It seemed as if liberty had been acquired only to be abused. In many of the states all sense of honor and good faith was fast disappearing. The general government was so feeble, that it could exercise no salutary influence ; and so insignificant did it appear in the eyes of foreign governments, that they refused to negotiate with it. What though the several states had each its own government nominally republican and free ; it availed them little without the means of uniting their power and interests in one compact whole. They were but separate and distinct parts of one great machine, which, for want of the balance wheel that was afterwards supplied in the constitution, were in hourly

danger of coming into collision, and destroying each other. They were planets, each indeed revolving on its own centre, but without the great sun of the system, under whose influence they now move in their orbits with such beautiful harmony, they would long since have "shot madly from their spheres," and rushed together in chaotic confusion. It was evident to all that the old confederation could not accomplish the purposes for which it was designed; and the question was already agitated of forming several distinct empires from among the states. But for the timely remedy of existing evils which was afforded by the constitution, this country, now so prosperous and happy, would, in all probability, have become the seat of civil conflicts, more sanguinary than those under which the South American states have been writhing in agony, almost without intermission, since they declared themselves free; until the whole would have fallen under the dominion of some military chieftain, or been subjugated by some foreign ally. Instead of the vast and beautiful expanse upon which the eye of the patriot and the philanthropist now delights to dwell, covered with fruitful fields, with smiling villages, and splendid cities, with its swelling tide of population flowing wave after wave, into the surrounding wilderness, making the desert every where at its approach "rejoice and blossom like the rose;" the friends of freedom would have had to mourn over a country, so nobly redeemed from foreign thraldom, drenched in the blood of its own children, ravaged and depopulated by intestine wars, rent by anarchy, or crushed by despotism. Such are the evils from which, in all human probability, these states, now united and happy, were saved by the constitution.

Upon the consequences of its adoption it is hardly necessary

to remark. Not to speak of the unrivalled prosperity of our own country, he must be blind indeed, who does not see them operating, with a silent powerful influence, in every nation of the civilized world. Popular rights and popular influence are every where attracting more regard. The people every where begin to feel their strength, to extend their intelligence, and to claim a share at least in their own government. In some of the countries of the old world, popular institutions have been established ; and even in those subjected to despotic sway, unwonted deference is now paid to popular opinion. The sleeping lion has been aroused, and is breaking his bonds. The kings of the earth are appalled at his power ; and it requires not the ken of inspiration to see, that if no unpropitious accident should occur to interrupt the course of free government in this country, a century will not elapse before the people of the whole European continent will be governed by their own representatives. These are the growing fruits of the American Constitution. Without it the declaration and acknowledgment of our independence would only have added another to the many proofs which were supposed to exist, of the incapacity of the mass of the people for their own government. They would have furnished a powerful argument in favor of the divine right of kings, whom they would have led to believe, that it was charity to rule those who could not govern themselves. A chill would have been struck to the hearts of the friends of freedom throughout the world; who would have lamented that our patriotic fathers had the courage to declare, and the energy to establish, an independence which they had not the wisdom to secure.

With this constitution and its great results, it was the glory

of James Madison, a graduate of this institution, and a member of one of the literary societies I am now addressing, to be identified. He may be said, without injustice to his great contemporaries, to have had a more effective agency in its formation than any other individual. He first brought the subject forward in the house of delegates of Virginia, in 1785. He was a member of the convention which was held at Annapolis, in 1786. He was one of the representatives of his state in the federal congress which seconded the recommendation of the delegates who met at Annapolis, that another convention should be held in Philadelphia. He urged the appointment of delegates to that body by the legislature of Virginia, and endeavored to obtain the consent of Gen. Washington to be placed at their head. Of that convention it is known to every one that he was a leading member: and it now appears, that, in addition to the prodigious mental labor of originating many and discussing most of the important questions that came before that body, he took accurate notes of all the debates. When the anxious labors of the convention had terminated in the formation of the present constitution, and the result of their deliberations had been submitted to the states for their ratification, under circumstances of doubt and discouragement which made every friend of the union tremble with apprehension, the mind of Mr. Madison was engaged in urging its adoption, by the composition of those celebrated papers, whose fame is co-extensive with that of the constitution itself, and by his speeches in the Virginia convention, where he was called to contend with the powerful eloquence and high reputation of Patrick Henry. Mr. Madison also proposed to the first congress most of the amendments which were made to the con-

stitution after its ratification ; and he was an influential member of the successive congresses, by which the several acts were passed for giving it construction and carrying it into effect. Conspicuous as he was in the organization of the government, he was not less distinguished by the ability with which he defended it from foreign aggressors. At the period during which he filled the office of Secretary of State, the extraordinary situation of affairs in Europe, and our peculiar position in relation to the great powers of that quarter of the globe, required the discussion of a series of important questions respecting international rights, such as will probably never again arise, in the same compass of time, in the course of our existence as a nation. The documentary history of that day is full of proofs, that the American Secretary, among the eminent statesmen of the old world whom he was called to encounter, never met his superior. He was raised to the Presidential chair in 1808 : and before the close of his first term, the event came which he had so long labored with all the powers of his mind to prevent—war with the most powerful nation of Europe. Many of the friends of the constitution looked to this event as the severest test it would have to undergo ; while its enemies, both at home and abroad, confidently predicted that the whole structure would fall with the first assault of foreign hostility. Even recently, a European writer, who in many respects has done justice to our institutions, has expressed the opinion, with experience to the contrary staring him in the face, that the union of the states, however strong in time of peace, must necessarily be weak and liable to dissolution in time of war. Madison entered, with unwavering confidence, the conflict into which the country had been forced ; brought

to its support all the energy of his character, and all the resources of his mind; and just before his withdrawal from the cares and honors of political life, saw the close of the contest, with a feeling of joy and triumph he had never before experienced, but upon the adoption of the constitution, the duration of which was now sealed, to the satisfaction of the most sceptical of its friends. The remainder of his life was passed in literary and rural retirement; with the exception of a few days, during which he was prevailed on to lend his presence and counsel as a member of the Convention which revised the constitution of Virginia: and, three years since, he descended to the grave, in the fulness of age and of glory.

Such, my young friends, was the enviable career of the first President of the Society of Alumni of this institution. Of all the great men that our country has produced, and whose loss it has had to deplore, there is probably no one who was for so long a time so intimately connected with its most important concerns; and there is certainly none that I could hold up to your imitation as a more perfect model of an American statesman. It is difficult to say whether he was better fitted to sustain this character by his qualities of intellect or disposition. His natural talents, though not of a brilliant character, were yet of a very high order. Destitute, in a great measure, of that fertility of imagination and quickness of sensibility which enter into our ideas of genius, he possessed, in a high degree, those most valuable endowments of a great statesman, a sound judgment and strong powers of reasoning. These natural faculties were cultivated and strengthened by constant exercise, by a careful study of political science, and by a profound observation of passing events. Of our own constitution and

laws no one had a more thorough knowledge, for no one had a larger share in framing them. To this great work he not only brought all his native powers of understanding, but, mindful of the value of past experience to correct the errors of the most plausible speculation, he tested every measure by the principles he had carefully extracted from the history of existing and pre-existing governments, both of the ancient and modern world. His speeches abound with the sagest maxims; and present instances of almost preternatural insight into future events. The principle which is so urgently and solemnly impressed upon the American people in Washington's farewell address, and to a reverential regard for which so much of our national prosperity may justly be attributed, that we should scrupulously abstain from all intermixture with the politics of Europe, was first suggested in a speech delivered by Mr. Madison as early as 1778, before the Virginia convention for ratifying the constitution: and the same speech contains a most remarkable prediction of the war into which we were twenty-four years afterwards impelled; and of one of the principal causes which led to it, arising out of our neutral relation to two belligerent powers, which, at the time the prediction was uttered, were at peace with each other. Mr. Madison was gifted by nature with a temperament which, favored and established by careful moral culture, gave to his talents all the force and influence of which they were susceptible. He displayed that most happy union of mildness and firmness, which gives grace and strength to a public man. He possessed that calm contemplative disposition, and habitual self-command, which led him to look at every subject dispassionately and without prejudice, and to bring to its considera-

tion, and to the support of his opinion when formed, the unencumbered powers of his strong intellect. His eloquence was such as becomes a modern statesman : not of that bold dazzling character, which is best fitted to sway a popular assembly, where immediate action is the object ; but calm, argumentative, persuasive, dignified, chaste ; such as befits a select assembly of men chosen from the mass of the community for their superior intelligence, to decide upon questions of great difficulty and moment, and who are expected to deliberate before they act. Of this most valuable sort of eloquence, Mr. Madison's speeches are specimens of which his country may be proud ; and the proceedings of the Virginia convention will show that even the brilliant and impassioned oratory of a Henry could not successfully resist their power. As a diplomatist, he always exhibited that candor and directness of purpose which are in consistency with the republican character of our government ; never concealing his own object, or seeking to obtain a covert advantage from his adversary. A purer patriot never existed. His ambition was of the most elevated character ; and was so completely identified with his love of country, that the two could not be distinguished. Every act which contributed to his advancement, seemed designed only for the good of his country. He never sacrificed principle to popularity. He was never known, in a single instance in his long career, to resort to intrigue or stratagem, or even to make any personal effort, of the most ordinary and admissible character, with a view solely to his own political aggrandizement. It may be truly said of him (and of how few can it be said !) that honor and office sought him, not he honor or office. And yet few men have risen more rapidly. He ascended, by the

buoyancy of his own merit, steadily and majestically, to the zenith of fame and distinction: and after remaining for a while, self-poised and secure, at the highest point of elevation to which human worth or human ambition can rise, he descended gracefully to the level of private station, accompanied by the admiration and benedictions of a grateful country. The close of a life so unsullied and useful could not but be honored and happy. Whatever harshness or uncharitableness the people of this country may at times exhibit, during the heat of party conflict, towards their public men, it must in justice be admitted, that they have always manifested a grateful recollection and a due reverence towards those, who, after having faithfully served them in the highest office within their gift, have retired from political life. Mr. Madison's declining years were watched by his countrymen with filial anxiety. His sun descended below the horizon without a cloud; and all eyes, even those which turned away from its meridian splendor, gazed with delight upon the mild lustre of its setting.

The talents and disposition of Mr. Madison led him to civil pursuits: the genius of AARON OGDEN, the next distinguished alumnus whose character I am to bring to your notice, was decidedly military. To the last year of his life, it glowed in his eye; it was seen in his erect carriage, and measured though tottering step; it animated his conversation; and in the visions of his dying bed, transported him back, as it did the great exile of St. Helena, to the stirring scenes of the army and the camp. He graduated in the year 1773, as a member of a class which, from the number of twenty-nine of which it consisted, furnished three governors of states, and

three presidents of colleges. After leaving this institution he engaged himself as an assistant to Mr. Francis Barber, who was the teacher of a celebrated grammar school at Elizabethtown in this state, at which the late General Hamilton, Brockholst Livingston, and others distinguished in the history of our country received, in whole or in part, their elementary education. But the times were too exciting for spirits like his to content themselves with civil pursuits, or with an occasional expedition against the enemy. The crisis had arrived when the most vigorous efforts must be made, or the cause of liberty be lost. The disastrous events of the preceding campaign, the almost entire destruction or dispersion of the American army, the retreat of its miserable remains before their exulting pursuers, the disaffection which had consequently spread among those whom timidity or selfishness made mere waiters upon events, and the absence of all succor from abroad, had driven the friends of freedom to the brink of despair ; when the Commander-in-Chief, by one of the master strokes of his mighty mind, achieved in part within sight of the place where we are now assembled, for a time confounded his adversaries, and lighted up a gleam of hope in the eyes of his countrymen. The Congress and the General saw the importance of the juncture ; and they called in the most earnest and supplicating tones upon those who were not willing to be slaves, to come forth to the rescue. The appeal was not unheeded. Many a spark of military fire which had lain dormant, unknown even to its possessor, was fanned into a flame at this moment of reviving enthusiasm. From the farm, the workshop, the office of the professional man, the closet of the student, the seminary of learning, the defenders of their country sprang forth armed.

Many a brave heart leaped with ardor at this summons to the field, which ceased to beat long before the object of its aspirations had been accomplished : few indeed were permitted so long to exult in the glories and rewards of their patriotic valor, as the lamented brother whose memory is now our theme. In the spring of 1777 the school of Mr. Barber was broken up ; and principal and assistant both entered the army, the one as a major the other as a captain. Time will not permit me to follow the young officer who is the subject of my remarks through the various events of his military career ; in all of which he exhibited the spirit and enthusiasm of youth, admirably tempered by the caution and judgment of age. He was at the battles of Brandywine, Monmouth, and Springfield, and at the siege of Yorktown. The best proof of his merits is the confidence which his commanding officers universally reposed in him. At Monmouth he received the personal direction of General Washington, at the most critical period of the engagement, to reconnoitre an important position ; and upon his report, the commander-in-chief gave to the American army the order to advance, which determined the result of the action. Captain Ogden was afterwards appointed by General Maxwell his aid-de-camp : and such was the opinion entertained of him by that officer, that while he acted in that capacity, and subsequently as brigade major, he had nearly if not quite as large a share in the command of the brigade as the general himself. He distinguished himself at the battle of Springfield, by holding a very superior force of the enemy for some time in check ; and more particularly by his judicious disposition of the militia, who at a later period of the engagement were subjected wholly to his command. In 1780 he was chosen from the

whole army by General Washington to go upon a most delicate and interesting mission to the British lines, the purpose of which was to effect, if possible, an exchange of Arnold for Andre. The object, it is well known, was not accomplished ; but the duty entrusted to Captain Ogden was performed with the utmost skill and address, and in a manner entirely satisfactory to his commander. At the siege of Yorktown, General La Fayette, being called upon by Washington to select an officer for the command of the detachment which was to storm one of the famous redoubts in advance of the enemies' line, made choice of Colonel Barber ; and Captain Ogden was chosen to head that part of the detachment which was to intercept the retreat of the garrison to the main body of the enemy : but when the young officer had made himself thoroughly acquainted with the expected scene of action, and, confident of success, was burning with anticipation of the dangerous but honorable service he was to perform, Colonel Hamilton claimed, as his right according to the routine of duty, the command that had been assigned to Colonel Barber ; and the direction of the party which was to cut off the retreat of the garrison fell in consequence to another officer, who was unsuccessful in the object for which he was appointed. Captain Ogden was nevertheless engaged in the attack, and, sword in hand, contended with the bravest who should be the first to enter the redoubt. Upon this occasion also, his conduct received the particular approbation of General Washington.

With the close of the war, at the age of twenty-five, his military career may be said to have ended. He had borne his full share of the toils, the perils, and the sacrifices of the contest ; and he now participated in that act of unparalleled

patriotism, before which the brightest achievement of the warrior pales its lustre ; by which the officers of the Revolution, with just claims against the country they had saved unsatisfied, and with power in their hands to enforce them, laid down their swords voluntarily upon the altar of freedom, and retired, most of them in poverty, to the shades of private life. It was a painful and mortifying spectacle to see the subject of these remarks, nearly half a century afterwards, with hoary head and limbs trembling with age, supplicating, for himself and his few surviving comrades, the satisfaction of these claims from the public representatives of a nation, which had grown up to be a mighty empire from the seed which the hands of those suppliants had planted, and their blood had watered. The talents exhibited in the campaigns of the Revolution by the young officer of whom we are speaking were not forgotten by his seniors ; and when in 1797 it was thought necessary, from the threatening attitude of France, to increase the military establishment of the United States, he received the command of a regiment, which he held until the prospect of war had ceased and the army shortly before raised was disbanded. During the last war with Great Britain, Mr. Madison tendered to him a commission as Major General. This event rekindled the military ardor which had animated his youth. The tented field, the martial array, the exciting conflict, and "all the pride, pomp and circumstance of glorious war," presented themselves anew to his vision. The chivalrous youth of New Jersey clustered around, eager to attend him to the scenes of anticipated glory ; and he resolved once more to gird on the sword which had so long slept in its scabbard. But counsellors whose opinion he had been accustomed to reverence

urged him to decline; and their advice prevailed. They afterwards saw and acknowledged their error; but the opportunity, upon which hung the destinies of his life, was gone, and could not be recalled. What would have been the result of a different determination it is impossible for us to say: but those friends who knew him best, have ever cherished the belief, that it would have encircled with a halo of glory and prosperity, a head, which, at no distant period, was bowed almost to the dust with misfortune and persecution. During his short early career in the army of the Revolution, Colonel Ogden evinced the possession, in a high degree, of the heroic and passive virtues which go to make up the character of a soldier; and of the talents which constitute the great commander, with the exception, perhaps, of the power of rapid and judicious combination upon an extensive scale, which he had not the opportunity to exercise, but which those who were well acquainted with him know was conspicuous in the general character of his mind. He exhibited an active courage, a patient endurance of hardships, a quick and discriminating judgment, an unsleeping vigilance, an ardent devotion to the service, a strict regard to discipline. That high sense of honor and chivalrous courtesy of demeanor which add such lustre to the military character, marked his deportment through life. Were I permitted to trace him through the various scenes of his revolutionary service, I could show you these qualities displayed as occasion called them forth; and especially could I point you to an united exhibition of them all in the memorable campaign in Virginia, during which he commanded the infantry of M'Pherson's legion, composed of troops selected by La Fayette from his whole army, and ever placed at the point

of greatest danger. His participation in the hardships, the perils, the difficulties, and the triumphs of that campaign, was a crown of honor upon his youthful brow, which a veteran might have been proud to wear.

He was for a long time President of the state society of Cincinnati of New Jersey : and, a few years since, he received from his surviving fellow officers of the Revolution the highest tribute to his merit which they could pay, and the most grateful that he could receive, in his appointment to the Presidency of the general Society ; a place which, honored and distinguished as it is in itself, was rendered still more illustrious from having been filled by Washington, Hamilton, and Pinckney ; and by Washington, Hamilton, and Pinckney alone.

In speaking to you of the last President of the Alumni of our Institution, it has best suited my plan to present in the strongest relief his character as a *soldier* : but I should do great injustice to his memory, and to my own feelings, were I to leave you to infer that he was only in this respect conspicuous and a model for your imitation. He was eminent also as a scholar, a statesman, and a lawyer. He was an ardent admirer of the ancient classical authors ; and his conversation with literary friends was frequently embellished by ready and felicitous quotations from their works. He is one among many proofs of the great advantage a student derives from becoming an instructor of others. His critical knowledge and accurate recollection of the classics he always attributed principally to that cause. The taste never forsook him ; and often led him back, during the busiest part of his life, to the fountain at which he had drunk with so much pleasure in his early years. He had always a lively perception and enjoyment of literary excellence ; and in 1816 he received the highest literary degree,

From 1801 to 1803 he served as a senator in the congress of the United States. The reports of the debates in the senate at that day are so scanty, as scarcely to afford the means of judging of the comparative merit of the several speakers: but Col. Ogden is understood to have held a high standing in that body, which then contained a large share of talent, numbering among its members Nicholas and Mason of Virginia, Breckenridge of Kentucky, Mason of Massachusetts, and Morris of New York. For many years he was the leader of one of the great political parties in New Jersey; and upon its attaining a temporary ascendancy in 1812, he was chosen governor of the state. He entered upon the office at a most important period; and during his continuance in it, he discharged its duties with the utmost vigor and efficiency. Although he had opposed the declaration of war against Great Britain, he loved his country too well to permit its soil to be violated by an invading enemy, when he had in his power the means of resistance; and while he held the command of the militia of New Jersey, he stood ready at any moment to order them into the field at the call of the general government.

As a statesman and a politician he was distinguished; but the prime of his life was devoted to the study and practice of the legal profession. At the bar of New Jersey he occupied for many years a conspicuous place in the foremost rank. One indeed there was, of whom I am hereafter to speak, that stood "proudly eminent above the rest:" but, he excepted, the subject of my remarks, if he had his equals, had no superior. Possessing strong analytical and logical powers of mind, his disposition always led him to an examination of the principles by which a case was governed; and having made himself master of these, he reasoned from them with great clearness

and force, and was seldom surprised or thrown off his balance by the argument of his adversary. Although his first reliance was upon a knowledge of the elements which entered into the question he was called on to discuss, he was by no means negligent of the cases in which those elements had been applied. Seldom was there a more industrious lawyer. He never thought his duty discharged to his client or to himself, while a single corner of the case committed to his care remained unexplored. He studied the cause on both sides, and made most copious notes of his argument and authorities. To learning and industry he united great ingenuity and fertility of resources, quickness and accuracy of discrimination, and an eloquence which at times, when he was deeply moved or strongly excited, was of a very high order. His manner was graceful and imposing; his voice, though not musical, was strong and varied; his countenance had great power and diversity of expression; but, more than all this, he understood well the springs of human action. He was an enthusiastic admirer, and might almost be called a pupil, of Shakspeare, whose works he was never weary of perusing. The power of his eloquence was never perhaps more signally displayed, than when, after having in a great measure abandoned his profession, he was contending for his own rights, against those by whom he considered himself wronged and oppressed. Every thing contributed, at that period, to rouse him to exertion. The great importance of the questions involved, a firm conviction of the justice of his claims, a deep sense of personal injury, the resistance of a proud spirit against tyrannical oppression, his fortune and the happiness of his family at stake upon the issue, all conspired to call forth his utmost efforts. Every energy of body and

mind was brought into action. He flew from point to point with such rapidity, that, like Napoleon on the first invasion of France by the allied armies, he seemed possessed of the power of ubiquity; now sending his thrilling appeals for aid to the hearts of his fellow citizens of New Jersey; now thundering at the gate of the citadel which power and influence had erected against him in the capitol of New York. Friendless, and unsupported save by his own energy and the strength of his cause, he appeared before the legislature of that State urging them to repeal one of their own laws as unconstitutional. He had to contend with the influence of Fulton, then at the height of his popularity; and of the powerful family with which he was connected both by kindred and interest. Pride and prejudice were arrayed against him, as the assailant of an act of gratitude towards a citizen, in whom the state exulted as the greatest inventor and benefactor of modern times. It was honorable to his eloquence, that, making his way through a host of enemies, he carried his measure in the House of Assembly, and failed by but one vote to carry it through the Senate. Although he was unsuccessful, his defeat was a triumph. His opponents trembled at the power of his single arm. In the words of the Coriolanus of his favorite Shakspeare he might have exclaimed:

"Like an eagle in a dove cole,
I fluttered your Volsces in Corioli.
ALONE I did it."

It was honorable to him also as a lawyer, that he made this bold stand against a legislative act, which has since, upon a dispassionate hearing before the Supreme Court of the Union, been annulled, upon the very ground which at that early

period he assumed. But his efforts to sustain himself, mighty as they were, proved finally ineffectual. He made a few struggles more, but they were unavailing. His fortune was sunk, his spirits were broken, domestic affliction supervened, and he never recovered the ground from which he fell. You who saw him only in his latter days, saw him not as I once knew him. You beheld an old man battered by the storms of persecution ; great, indeed, in age and adversity. You saw a ruin riven by the thunderbolt, and dilapidated by time, though stately in its decay. I remember when that ruin was a majestic edifice. The aged and afflicted man whom you beheld, I remember before the hand of death had invaded his dwelling, and the still more ruthless hand of persecution had despoiled him of his fortune and his peace. Exulting in the full vigor of a powerful intellect, possessing a widely extended reputation, having the means of affluence at his command, blest more than most men with all that gives charm to domestic life, he was the pride of his friends and the joy of the social circle. How his countenance beamed with animation and pleasure, when throwing off in an instant, as he was wont to do, the cares of business, he joined the family circle, and united in dispensing the unbounded hospitality of which in his prosperous days it was ever the delightful centre ! But his persecutors came ; and all this scene of happiness disappeared like the fancy work of a dream. The victim was singled out for sacrifice, and followed with unrelenting fury. Like a noble lion hemmed in by savage hunters, he turned upon his pursuers, and kept them for a while at bay : but the toils were at length thrown over him, and these eyes beheld the aged captive, with the frosts of more than seventy winters upon his

head, looking out from the gratings of a prison. During his last years he was saved from destitution by the liberality, or rather, by the justice, of his country : but the rapacity of his creditors ceased not to follow him, until his venerable head, which during life was not permitted to lie down in peace, sunk to its final repose where “ the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest.”

The next of the deceased officers of the Alumni, of whose character I am to speak, I wish to present to you in the single light of an eminent jurist. It was one of the chief sources of his eminence, and a striking proof of his wisdom, that he concentrated his extraordinary powers upon one object. The younger members of the profession who looked up to him for advice, he uniformly and earnestly warned against suffering themselves to be diverted from their regular pursuit by the glitter of political preferment ; which has dazzled and fatally misled so many of the most promising youth of our country. The late RICHARD STOCKTON, to whom I allude, possessed talents, which, if he had chosen to become a public man, would undoubtedly have ranked him among the first statesmen of the day. He *was* distinguished as a statesman. Twice he consented to serve his country in Congress, at periods of critical importance which appeared to him to call for a sacrifice of his own interest and inclination. From 1796 to 1799, when he had barely passed the constitutional age, he was a member of the Senate of the United States ; and from 1813 to 1815 he was in the House of Representatives. I have already mentioned that the early debates in the Senate were so imperfectly reported, as to afford but a slender criterion of the relative merits of the disputants : but the speeches of Mr.

Stockton in the House of Representatives, at a later period, made an impression which all who were interested in the political discussions of that day will recollect; and a portion of one of them is inserted, as a model of eloquence, in the elementary books that are used in our schools. But his ambition and his labor were to attain eminence in his profession: and so completely was his fame in other respects eclipsed by his high reputation as a lawyer, that, whether justice to his memory or the usefulness of his example be considered, he should be exhibited solely in that character in which he stood forward in such bold relief. I cannot better convey to you an idea of his pre-eminent abilities as a lawyer, than by adverting to the fact that for thirty or forty years before his death he was, by universal admission, at the head of the New Jersey bar: a bar which during the greater portion of the period I have mentioned, it may safely be said, was not excelled in learning or eloquence by any in the Union. Whatever might be the rival claims of others, no one pretended to dispute the palm with him. He towered as conspicuously, though not with the same degree of superiority, above his surrounding brethren, as Cicero above his colleagues of the Roman forum. And what were the sources of his acknowledged greatness? They were a sound practical judgment, strong powers of reasoning, a plain manly eloquence, a diligent devotion to his profession, a bold independent spirit, the highest integrity of character, and a happy union of frankness, dignity, and courtesy of manners. His intellect was of a gigantic mould, and grasped with Herculean strength any subject that presented itself. His judgment never was disturbed by the false lights of imagination. His fancy was naturally so limited, or else so entirely subdued, that

he rarely made use of figurative language. Sparing as he was of ornament, and seldom as he resorted to pathos, in his addresses to a jury, he was nevertheless a most successful and interesting advocate. His arguments at bar in support of his legal opinions were for the most part irresistible: and even in cases at nisi prius which afforded the widest scope for appeals to the feelings of the jurors, he was a dreaded adversary. The most eloquent and impassioned oratory of an antagonist was paralyzed by his direct and powerful appeals to the understanding and the sense of justice of his hearers; and the snares of sophistry he trampled down and crushed with his mighty tread. His vision was as minute as it was extended; and penetrated the obscurest labyrinths of the most intricate cause. He was scarcely more remarkable for the clearness of his own comprehension, than for the felicity with which he communicated his ideas to others. Arranging his thoughts in the most easy and natural order, rejecting all irrelevant matter, and clothing his sentiments in the simplest language, many a cause was won by his mere statement before the argument commenced. To his extraordinary natural endowments his professional success is no doubt in part to be attributed; but much more to the assiduity with which the gifts of nature had been cultivated. It seems to be a law of the moral as of the physical world, that great solidity and strength are the result of slow growth. So backward was the mind of Mr. Stockton in attaining its maturity, that after he had completed his college term, an effort was made by his father to obtain for him a situation in a counting house, under an impression that he was deficient in talents for the bar. How different was his destiny! Not many years had elapsed when the unpromising youth had

not only mastered the first difficulties of the arduous pursuit for which he was thought incompetent, but had risen above all his competitors, and stood at the summit of the profession. From the commencement to the close of his career, he was a diligent student. It was not only his business, but his delight, to explore, with his note book by his side, the rich recesses of the black letter folios which are so seldom visited by the modern student; and the reports of Lord Coke were the recreation of his hours of leisure. But in no respect, perhaps, were the strength of his character and his practical wisdom more clearly evinced, than in his steady adherence to his profession, for such a length of years, to the exclusion of every other object; unseduced by the glare of political advancement, or the flattering promises of pecuniary speculation, by which so many of his colleagues were lured from the path that was conducting them to substantial fame and affluence, and plunged into irretrievable embarrassment and distress. His moral character was as elevated as his intellectual; and his personal appearance and manners were in harmony with both. No one who ever saw him but was struck with his majestic air, his fine expanse of forehead, his full dark eye, and a sublimity of the whole countenance which awed and yet attracted the beholder; impressing him with the idea of great strength of understanding, united with great goodness of heart. There was something in his presence, before which arrogant pretension drooped and withered like a plant without root in the rays of the sun; whilst modest merit felt assured of his countenance and encouragement. In the society of those who had his respect and confidence, his manners exhibited a most happy blending of dignity with affability; of that easy simplicity

which accompanies the highest refinement, with a stateliness neither unnatural nor unbecoming in one of his descent, and great mental powers. His feelings and principles of action were all of the most generous character. His were "high thoughts seated in a heart of courtesy." He possessed a lofty independence of spirit, which never permitted him to seek wealth, influence, or favor, by any but the most direct and honorable means; and his reputation for integrity of purpose and uprightness of practice was as unsullied at the close, as at the commencement, of his long professional career.

I have thus presented to you a slight sketch of the character of this great lawyer, without exaggeration, and without rhetorical ornament. The simple grandeur of such a character repels every attempt at embellishment. He was a man to whom this State and this country should be proud of having given birth. This Institution is most especially bound to cherish his memory: not only as one who himself reflected peculiar lustre upon his Alma Mater, and was for thirty-seven years a faithful protector of her interests; but as a member of a family by whom she has been watched with uninterrupted guardian care from her cradle: as the grandson of one whose hand was generously extended to support her feeble steps in infancy: as the son of one who was numbered in the first class of her graduates; who honored her by a life of distinguished reputation and usefulness, and by the death of a martyr in the cause of liberty; who was her never failing friend at home, and her most powerful advocate abroad; and whose influence procured for her, in the presidency of a Witherspoon, a benefit which she can never cease to feel, and for which she should never cease to be grateful.

ANDREW KIRKPATRICK, who was a Trustee of this College from the year 1809 until the period of his death, and who was one of the Vice Presidents of the Alumni, received his degree of Bachelor of Arts in the year 1775; and having been educated with a special view to the ministry in the Scotch Presbyterian church, he commenced the study of theology: but at the end of the first year, he determined to relinquish it for the profession of the law. He exhibited on this critical occasion an evidence of that determined spirit, which was destined to carry him through more than ordinary difficulties to the highest professional eminence. He was informed that the step he contemplated could only be taken at the expence of his father's favor, and of the pecuniary support which had been liberally extended to him. His resolution, however, had been deliberately taken; and notwithstanding the veneration, not unmixed with awe, with which he had always been accustomed to regard the injunction of a parent, who appears to have united a real regard for the best interests of his son with great inflexibility of opinion and sternness of character, he hesitated not, on this important occasion which involved the destinies of his life, to forfeit even his father's countenance and protection, and to enter upon his favorite pursuit, relying for subsistence upon his own extraordinary and unaided exertions. He fortunately became a student in the office of William Paterson, one of the first lawyers of his day; under whom he prosecuted legal studies with great diligence, while to procure the necessaries of life he was compelled to devote all the time that could be spared for the purpose to the teaching of a school. He was admitted to the bar in 1785, where talents of a high order, aided by the energy of his character and the most per-

severing industry, soon obtained for him a lucrative practice. In 1797, after having been but twelve years at the bar, he was appointed an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the state ; and in 1803 he was advanced to the office of Chief Justice, to which he was twice re-elected, and which he continued to hold for twenty-one years. No one could enter the court in which he sat without being struck by his extraordinary personal presence. He was the *beau ideal* of a minister of justice. No powdered wig or ermined robe was required to excite reverence for the bench on which he presided. His snow-white hair, his clear florid complexion, his dark lustrous eye, his strong but delicately chiselled features, the expression of gravity and firmness blended with a placid sweetness in his countenance, his imposing form, and the easy graceful dignity with which he discharged his judicial duties, arrested the attention of the most ignorant and thoughtless, and inspired the beholder with a respect approaching to awe. His enunciation was slow and distinct ; his voice full and musical ; and his opinions, when not previously prepared, were delivered with fluency and clearness ; when written, the language in which they were clothed was marked by great purity and precision. But it was not only in these external qualities of a judge, important as they are, that he excelled. He was a learned, and in regard to real estate a profoundly learned, lawyer. It is said by the late Charles Butler, one of the most eminent jurists of his day, that he is the best lawyer, and will succeed best in his profession, who best understands Coke upon Lyttleton. Few members of the profession have studied those great writers more diligently, or comprehended their works more thoroughly, than the late Chief Justice of whom I am speaking : and upon many

of the difficult questions respecting title to land which came before him for adjudication in the course of his long official career, his opinions exhibit a depth of research, a familiarity with leading principles, a clearness of comprehension, a power of discrimination, and a justness of reasoning, which upon such questions secured him the particular confidence of the bar, and entitled him to rank among the first American jurists. His mind was not rapid, but it was uncommonly exact ; and the want of quickness was carefully supplied by unwearying application to the object of investigation. His frequent re-election to the bench by the representatives of the people of the State, unaffected by the mutations of party, sets the seal of public opinion to his impartial administration of justice, the general integrity of his character, and the ability with which his duties were performed. He passed the last few years of his life retired from public employment ; and died leaving a name which will always be conspicuous in the juridical annals of New Jersey.

The brethren whose characters I have thus briefly and imperfectly sketched died at an advanced age ; all of them, save one, after having passed the verge of man's allotted existence. He of whom I am now to speak was cut off in the prime of a life of great activity and usefulness. It was not the natural decay of a venerable and time-worn edifice, over which his friends and his country were called to mourn ; but the sudden fall of a noble column, standing but yesterday firm upon its base, pointing in lofty and beautiful proportion to the skies, now broken in the midst and precipitated to the earth. The name of JOHN HENRY HOBART, the late Bishop of the diocese of New York, brings to the recollection a rare assem-

blage of virtues and talents. Possessed of powers which would have made him great in almost any situation, in the senate, the forum, or the field ; and which, had they been exerted solely with a view to his own aggrandizement, might have filled the world with his fame ; he laid them in self-denying humility at the foot of the cross. Deeply imbued with the spirit of religion from his youth, his whole life was a series of unremitting efforts for its establishment and extension. Every object was viewed and estimated in reference to that greatest of all interests : and however many may have differed from him in opinion as to the means by which it was most effectually to be promoted, no one who had an opportunity of observing him in those private and unguarded moments which afford the best criterion of real character, and who has read the secret and confidential communications of his early years, which have been published since his death, can doubt for a moment that his heart was sincerely and ardently engaged in the service to which his life was devoted. He possessed the first and most indispensable qualification for his sacred profession, a sincere love of its duties ; a cordial consecration of himself, soul and body, to the cause of his Divine Master. Added to this he had almost every quality of heart and mind, which is fitted, in the absence of direct inspiration, to render the minister of Christ successful in his high and holy vocation. He was gifted by nature with extraordinary endowments. To a strong and remarkably correct judgment, he united a lively imagination, and an exquisite sensibility. How often is genius like his made an excuse for enervating indolence, or perverted and abused to the injury of its possessor and of his fellow men ! But the distinguished person of whom I am speaking was

seriously impressed, almost from his cradle, with the consciousness that he was one day to render a solemn account of the talents with which he was entrusted. Acting under this impression, he suffered no opportunity to escape of cultivating his natural faculties or acquiring useful knowledge. No one ever appreciated more highly, or reaped more diligently, the inestimable advantages afforded by the venerable seat of learning within whose precincts it is our happiness this day to have assembled : advantages, over the neglect of which many a tear of bitter remorse has been shed. The high honor with which he graduated, attests his diligent attention to his college studies : and I feel assured that every member of the American Whig Society whom I now address, will bear me witness, that of the many, very many great men who with feelings of pride and gratitude trace back much of their success in life to the secret benefits of that association, few, if any, have evinced a more ardent and devoted attachment to its interests, or reflected upon it a more brilliant lustre. Having completed the regular term of study, and received the degree of Bachelor of Arts, he still fondly lingered, year after year, in these classic shades ; unwilling to leave the calm delights of literary retirement, and those opportunities of improvement which he was sensible he could never elsewhere enjoy to the same extent. But the season of necessary preparation being past, his duty called him to more active scenes ; and tearing himself away from the tranquil charms of college life, he hastened to the field of active service, in which he was never to know repose but upon his arms. Of his eminent usefulness to the church of which at the early age of thirty-five he was consecrated a bishop, and of his brilliant success in the accomplishment of the designs

which he thought best calculated to promote her prosperity, it would be useless for me to speak. The immense diocese over which he presided at his death, and which, from [its rapid growth under his administration, has since been necessarily divided, is filled with monuments of his almost apostolical zeal. The Protestant Episcopal Church throughout America resounds with his praises, which are echoed back by the Episcopal Churches of England and Scotland. In every quarter of our country his name and fame are known: many who were once his warmest opponents have been led to acknowledge the soundness of his views: and thousands, who never acquiesced in his religious opinions, have felt and expressed a just pride that America has produced such a man.

If I were called upon to name the most striking trait of his character, I should unhesitatingly pronounce it to be his *moral courage*: that great virtue, without which all other virtues are frequently useless. To fear in the discharge of his duty he was an entire stranger. He was a bold and faithful soldier of the cross. Dangers and difficulties which would have appalled ordinary men had no terrors for him. Whatever might be the number or the power of his adversaries, he met them with an unfaltering step and an unblenching courage. If that portion of the Christian domain which was entrusted to his care were threatened with assault, he waited not for followers, nor did he ask the strength of the enemy; but seizing the banner of Christ and the Church, he flew to the ramparts; and as he was the first to advance, so his opponents will bear testimony that he was the last to retire. But though, when sudden danger surprised him, he met it with the courage of an apostle and the self-devotion of a martyr, his bravery was without the

least tincture of rashness. Where time was allowed him for deliberation, no man was more careful in his preparation for defence or attack ; and none adapted his means more skilfully to the end to be accomplished.

The appearance of rashness which his measures sometimes assumed to the eye of the superficial observer, was owing to another remarkable trait of his character—*the prodigious rapidity of his mental and physical movements.* His acute vision penetrated the most gnarled questions with the quickness of lightning : and with him action was almost as rapid as thought. The shortest conceivable time intervened between the first suggestion of an object to his mind and its accomplishment. Such were the promptness of his determination and the instantaneousness of his action, that his opponents were often surprised by the complete execution of a purpose which they were yet thinking upon the means of frustrating. The quickness of his mental operations extended to the acquisition of knowledge ; and though the active duties which pressed upon him from the beginning to the close of his professional life, left him little time for study, his controversial opponents never found him unprepared. He extracted at a glance all that was most valuable in an author ; and he was equally ready in deriving instruction from passing events, and from his intercourse with the world. All that he thus obtained his retentive memory treasured up for use ; and he applied it with promptness and dexterity upon the most sudden emergency.

Another prominent characteristic was his *far-reaching vision.* His perception of future and remote events seemed in some instances almost like the inspiration of a seer. But the means of his prescience were perfectly natural and simple. He

used, with great care and skill, the only telescope which since the days of the prophets Providence has vouchsafed to man for looking into the future—the application of general principles tested and confirmed by past experience. His mental eye, strong in itself, being thus assisted, penetrated the distant obscure; and saw, with clearness and distinctness, objects which were hid from the common view until they were brought nearer by the revolution of time. No project ever received his sanction merely from its temporary success, or from its promise of temporary utility. No sooner was it proposed to him, than his keen gaze was directed to its remote, as well as to its immediate, results. He tried it by the rule of which I have spoken; and if, when weighed in the balance of sound principles, it were found wanting, he rejected it at once, as being the more dangerous and likely to work greater injury from its momentary success. He had seen many a tree send up its branches for a season with surprising luxuriance, which had nevertheless a defect at the root; and he had observed that the early ripening of its fruits was but a symptom of its speedy decay. He knew that the most deadly heresies that had infested the moral world, had, for purposes inscrutable to us, been permitted by Providence for a while to flourish with all the freshness and beauty of truth; and he saw that Heaven had thus set the seal of its prohibition upon that species of reasoning, which would infer the divine favor from mere temporary prosperity.

Possessing in a high degree the qualities which fit a man to be a leader, courage, promptness of thought and action, and a far-seeing sagacity, it is not surprising that another prominent feature of his character was an *extraordinary power over the minds of men*. However adverse his opinions or his policy

might be to the fashion or prejudices of the day, or to the general current of public sentiment, he had but to set up his standard, and followers flocked around it. Such was the confidence inspired by the general soundness of his judgment, and his activity and perseverance in the accomplishment of his designs, that, within the sphere of his episcopal jurisdiction, opposition to his principles or policy was, during the latter years of his life, entirely hopeless. Surrounded by men of eminent abilities in their respective pursuits, and of unquestioned independence of mind, his judgment upon matters which came within his province was in most cases supreme, with laity as well as clergy ; and was deferred to without contradiction. But if his opinions were questioned, then the flood-gates of his eloquence were opened ; and opposition was overwhelmed by a torrent of argument, or borne gently away upon the smoother current of persuasion. In public or in private, no one can have listened to him when his sensibility was excited, without feeling that he was, in the highest sense of the term, an orator. In the pulpit, his manner was solemn and impressive, as became the subjects upon which he discoursed : it was always earnest and animated, and at times highly impassioned. His voice was singularly powerful and melodious ; and in its rich variety a tone was found for every feeling of the human breast. No description can convey an idea of the thrilling effect which was occasionally given to some single passage of a discourse by his manner of delivery. A striking sentiment, clothed in simple language, was not only sent directly home to the conscience, but burnt in, as it were, upon the heart, so that no lapse of time or change of circumstances could ever obliterate the impression. But his eloquence in the

pulpit was exceeded by that which he displayed in extempora-neous debate, or serious conversation, upon a subject which interested his feelings. The diffuseness of style and repetition of thought which sometimes detracted from the strength of his written discourses, had no existence in his unstudied appeals; and the arguments which on such occasions he threw forth in rapid succession, glowing with the fervor of excited feeling, overcame all resistance, and achieved an easy victory. His talents, however, great as they were, contributed not more to his success in transfusing his opinions into the minds of others, than the silent but powerful influence of his private character. His candor and independence of spirit, his moral uprightness, his benevolence of disposition, his acts of charity, his courteous and affable deportment, were so many pioneers to open a pas-sage for him to the understandings and hearts of those whom he was anxious to convince.

But of his private and domestic virtues, which inspired the love and confidence of all who knew him, it is not my purpose at present to speak. The remembrance of them was seen in the flood of grief which overwhelmed his friends, and the general gloom that pervaded the city of his residence, at the news of his unexpected death. It was seen in the long funeral pro-cession, composed of all classes and denominations, winding its slow and solemn way, through crowds of mourning citizens, to that holy temple where for thirty years he had ministered in holy things. It was seen in the tears that bathed the coun-tenances of the congregation of his people, assembled, at the hour of twilight, amid the Gothic gloom of that venerable edi-fice, to witness the performance of the last sad rites over the remains of their late pastor and bishop. 'The qualities which

endeared him to the vast circle in which he moved were the fruits of a most amiable natural temper, and of that faith which was his guide and consolation in life, his light through "the grave and gate of death," and his title, we may humbly trust, through the merits and mediation of his Redeemer, to that crown in Heaven, which is promised to those who are "faithful unto the end."

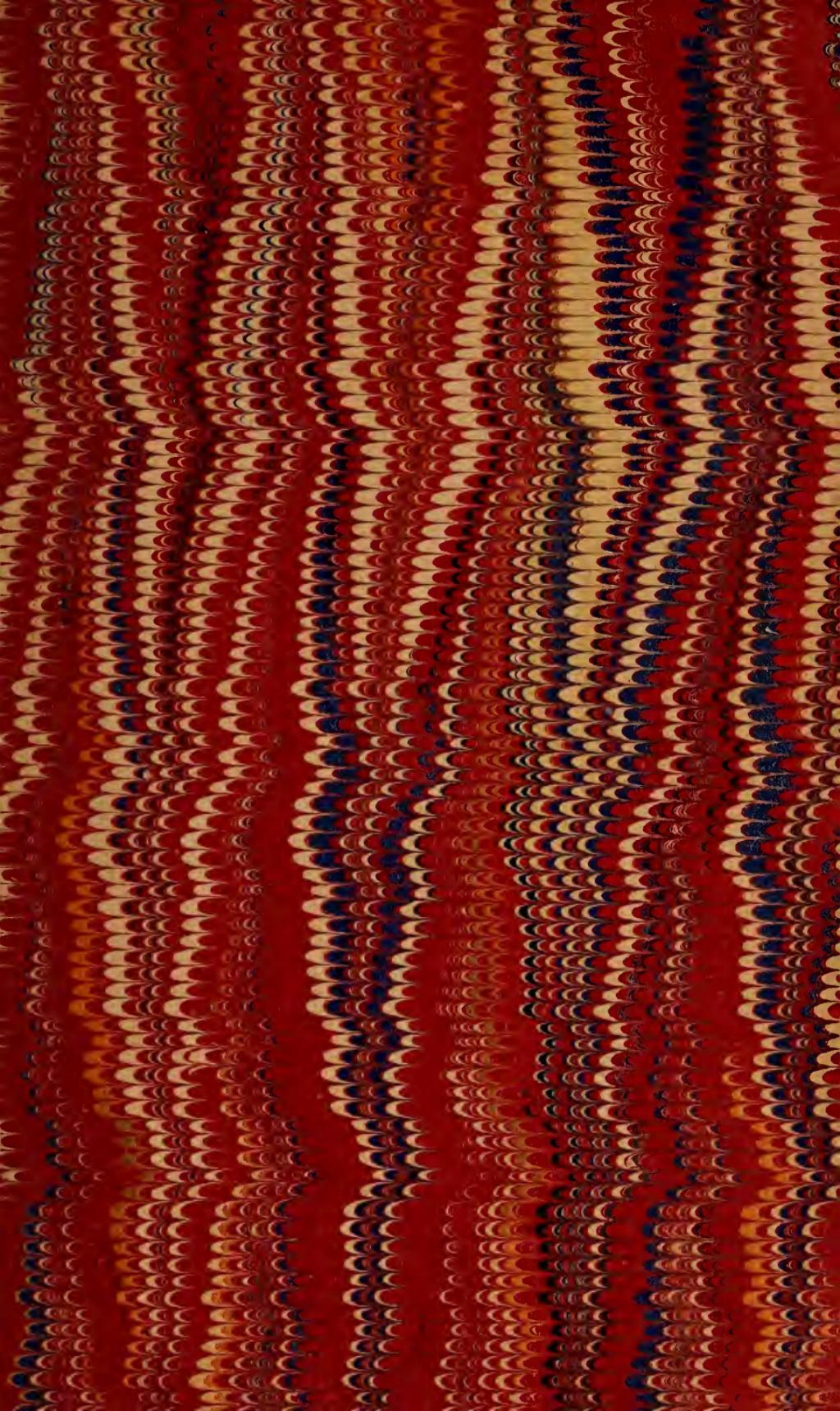
I have thus pointed out to your notice some of the leading characteristics of our deceased brethren. In doing so I feel that I have made an unreasonable requisition upon your time and patience: but I trust that you will bear with me one moment longer, while I say to our young friends who are standing upon the threshold of active life—imitate *their* virtues. Seck, by all honorable means, the distinction to which they attained; not for its own sake, but as a means of being useful to your fellow men. It is only in this regard, that honor or applause is worth the pursuit. There is no greater delusion than the expectation of happiness from mere eminence of station. It was said by Pope Adrian the Fourth, (and general experience attests the correctness of the sentiment,) that though he had risen by degrees from the lowest to the highest dignity in the world, he had never found that any of those elevations made the least addition to his happiness. Thousands have felt what Cardinal Wolsey so affectingly expressed, when he said to the attendant of his dying bed: "If I had served my God with half the zeal with which I have served my king, he would not have given me over in my gray hairs." It is especially true in this country, where every officer is but the servant of the people, that the labor and care which are the inseparable attendants of high station, far overbalance the personal

gratification which it affords to a selfish ambition. It is only in reference to another and more enduring state of existence, that any man can be said to be really great: and it is only through the opportunity it affords for the enlarged cultivation and exercise of those virtues which are of heavenly origin, and which will continue to bloom and expand long after this transitory life shall have ended, that worldly distinction can confer either true glory or substantial happiness. The brightest career of the most gifted genius, who in his pursuit of power and praise elevates not his thoughts above this changeful and perishing world, is but the flash of a meteor, which dazzles the eye for a moment and then disappears in darkness. Let it be your aspiration, radiant with light immortal, to "shine as the brightness of the firmament," and "as the stars for ever and ever."









LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 028 321 422 9